



Safety Gram

Protecting Resources Through Better Risk Management

Safety Division's Monthly *Safety Gram* is provided to leaders to maintain awareness of mishap trends that directly affect the operational readiness of the Corps to assist high-risk Marines and Sailors in identifying, assessing, and controlling hazards they may experience both on and off-duty.

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September - November 2015: Mishap Summary

The Mishaps below occurred throughout the USMC from 1 September to 30 November 2015, causing serious injury or death to Marines, and/or damage to equipment.

2 September 2015. While conducting a frag, a CH-53E experienced a tail rotor failure and subsequent crash. Ten Marines were injured and one Marine was life-flighted to a nearby hospital, where they died due to the injuries sustained. The aircraft is reported as a total loss.

4 September 2015. SNM died in a motorcycle accident while at home on leave.

8 September 2015. SNM was TAD when he was found at the bottom of a hotel stairwell. SNM sustained a C7 fracture with spinal cord damage that resulted in paralysis of the lower extremities. SNM is listed as SI.

10 September 2015. While traveling on a USMC installation, a seven-ton vehicle carrying 19 passengers turned a corner and rolled down a hill resulting in one fatality and 18 injured Marines.

18 September 2015. SNM was involved in a single-motorcycle accident on the highway. After being transported to the local hospital, SNM was pronounced deceased by a competent medical authority.

18 September 2015. SNM's POV impacted a concrete pillar. SNM was pronounced deceased at the scene of the accident by local emergency services.

26 September. SNM was involved in a motorcycle accident on the highway, and was pronounced deceased on the scene by a competent medical authority.

29 September 2015. SNM was struck and killed by a passing vehicle after exiting vehicle to assist a stranded motorist. The vehicle that struck SNM stopped for a short duration and then left the accident scene.

5 October 2015. SNM was involved in an AT-V accident, suffering severe damage to both eyes, damage to the right side carotid artery, a C-2 neck break, multiple fractures to the face, facial tears, and lacerations.

7 October 2015. SNM was rear-ended while riding a motorcycle resulting in a skull fracture. On 15 October, SNM succumbed to the injuries and was pronounced deceased.

10 October 2015. SNM was struck by another vehicle after exiting his own after a minor accident. He was declared deceased at the scene.

11 October 2015. SNS was found unresponsive after drinking alcohol at an off-base residence. EMS took SNS to the hospital where SNS was pronounced deceased.

21 October 2015. Following take off, on a flight of six aircraft, an F/A-18C crashed approximately six miles northwest of the airfield. The pilot was declared deceased.

25 October 2015. SNM died when he crashed his vehicle, resulting in fire. SNM was in a drilling status.

7 November 2015. SNM sustained fatal injuries in a single motor vehicle accident.

13 November 2015. A Marine died from a traumatic head injury sustained during MCMAP training.

18 November 2015. While on leave, SNM died in a single motor vehicle accident.

23 November 2015. A Marine sustained head injuries from an apparent fall and was found deceased.

29 November 2015. SNM died after falling from an elevated location in a hotel.



New Ways to Cope Stress Identification and Coping Skills



The holidays are fast-approaching, and December is National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month. While this time of year is largely joyful and festive for many, it can also prove to be stressful on several fronts. CMC(SD) and the Substance Abuse Counseling Center encourage Marines to use alcohol and medication responsibly, and note that these substances are not beneficial to you or others as coping mechanisms.

As a Marine, you know life's highs and lows like few others. You've trained hard, fought hard, and earned your nation's respect. Yet managing stress is complex. Like combat, it's vital to know the threat, risks and resources. Drinking might seem to relieve some of the stress, but soon it becomes the threat. Be aware of the kind of stress that makes you reach for a drink and the risks of alcohol misuse/abuse. Plan alternatives. Resiliency isn't found in a bottle.

The Substance Abuse Program supports Commanders in preventing alcohol and drug issues by equipping Marines with effective risk awareness education and tools to promote the safety of Marines, their families, and enhance unit performance across the Corps.

If you are interested in learning more about the Substance Abuse Program services contact your installation Substance Abuse Counseling Center (SACC).

33rd EFPB Results

With a collection of prominent USMC leadership including the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, the 33rd Executive Force Preservation Board (EFPB) took place at the Pentagon on 17 September 2015.

Marine and Family Services Division (MF) presented a suicide assessment throughout the Marine Corps, and the Director of MF provided information on suicide prevention support for commanders. This support addressed current and future programs addressing this issue.

Additionally, a panel of three sergeants presented to the EFPB in regard to a variety of force preservation topics. The panelists spoke on -- and answered questions regarding -- leadership and mentorship practices, limitations hindering non-commissioned officers from exercising their best leadership, and gaps in the USMC leadership development package. Afterwards, the panel received positive recognition for their contributions to the meeting.

The EFPB concluded by closing out on a number of topics from previous Boards, and identifying items to be addressed during the next iteration. At this time, the 34th EFPB is scheduled for March 2016 in the National Capital Region, and participants should expect forthcoming information in January. A full message regarding the 33rd EFPB can be found at <http://www.marines.mil/News/Messages/MessagesDisplay/tabid/13286/Article/175128/thirty-third-executive-force-preservation-board-results.aspx>.



Holiday Safety on All Fronts

The turkey needs to be basted. A young family member is getting under foot in the kitchen. Somebody needs to lay out the centerpiece and uncork the wine.

Does this sound familiar? These are just a few of the many things that can occur throughout the series of festivities that occur between Thanksgiving and New Years. Hosting family, attending parties, and preparing food are just a small sampling of the opportunities in which safety threats can be made present. While tending to food, entertaining family, and managing to other tasks in the midst of celebration, there's a number of potential risks presented during the holidays. Join CMC(SD) in considering and preparing against these threats in anticipation of a great holiday season.

DECORATIONS

According to the Electric Safety Foundation International (ESFI), a 2013 study indicated that over 86% of Americans decorate their homes for the holidays. Of those individuals and families, nearly two thirds use electric lights indoors, and more than half use them outdoors. Furthermore, over 60% of those decorators utilize at least one extension cord. With those things in mind, electrical and fire risks can become especially prevalent during this time of year.

If a family decorates a Christmas tree, be sure to select a fresh one, as it will remain green longer and offer less risk of fire than a dry tree. To maintain the tree when placing it in the stand, it's recommended to cut one to two inches from the base of the trunk and place the tree in water to keep it hydrated. The water should be refilled daily. Should an artificial tree be the preference, try to purchase one labeled as "Fire Resistant," and don't use electric ornaments or lights on any trees that have metallic leaves, needles, or branches.

In terms of other holiday lighting, ESFI recommends using LED lights, which remain cool to the touch and are also manufactured with non-glass materials, making them more durable. Make certain that strings of lights are not placed over light bulbs, lamp shades, or other electrical surfaces. Lastly and crucially, always turn off both indoor and outdoor lighting before leaving home or going to bed.

Candles also feature prominently during this season, and they also require signification safety consideration. Consider using electrical candles when possible. If using traditional candles, never leave them unattended and always extinguish them when unattended. Lit candles should not be placed near any combustible objects, on the tree or other greenery, or near other decorations or wrapping paper.

GENERAL FOOD PREP

Be certain to wash your hands frequently after handling food, using the bathroom, handling pets, or any other activities that could present contaminants to your meal. Using the same spoon to both stir and taste food is another opportunity to introduce bacteria and viruses to your dishes, so avoid doing this as well.

If you're traveling with food to a hosted meal, be mindful of food safety. Perishable foods should not be exposed to room temperature for more than two hours. That includes preparation time for un-

cooked foods. If extended travel is involved, it's wise to bring non-perishable items to the meal -- rolls, breads, and cookies are viable options. Hot foods should remain hot (140°F or greater), and chilled foods should be transported in coolers. Traveling with perishable ingredients in a cooler and preparing the food upon arrival is also a solution for guests.

TRAVEL

Speaking of travel, Thanksgiving is one of the most heavily-trafficked holidays every year, while various holiday celebrations such as Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa also present numerous transportation challenges. Therefore, practicing safety is crucial. If you're driving, make certain that the vehicle is in good working order, has adequate gas in the tank and air in the tires, and that all passengers wear their seatbelts. The driver should be well-rested and not impaired for either leg of the trip.

Don't allow an urgency to arrive outweigh the importance of conservative driving. The driver's full attention should be on the road, and distractions such as cell phones should not be present. Make frequent stops and rotate drivers for longer trips. Drive cautiously by maintaining safe distances between cars, using turn signals, traveling at appropriate speeds (based on speed limits, traffic, and road conditions), and following the rules of the road.

ALCOHOL

Guests should not drink excessive amounts of alcohol, especially if they are returning home that evening. A designated driver needs to be determined in advance of the holiday. Despite it being in the rearview mirror, Thanksgiving poses one of the highest rates of alcohol-related driving fatalities -- followed closely by New Years -- so even if guests aren't impaired, other vehicles on the road should be monitored carefully to avoid reckless drivers.

By keeping these things in mind during the holidays, Marines and their families can enjoy a safe and festive time of celebration. This year and every year, CMC(SD) is extremely thankful for the devoted men and women of the USMC. Happy Holidays and Semper Fi!



DO YOU KNOW?

Marine Corps Safety & Force Preservation

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Fire extinguishers are intended to be used as the first line of defense when fighting fires in emergency situations.

- A fire extinguisher is a pressurized vessel filled with:
 - A solid, liquid, or gas substance for fighting a fire.
 - A propellant which is a pressurized chemical that make the firefighting substance expel when the handle is pressed.
- The cylinder is made of strong steel to maintain the high pressure propellant inside and to prevent the extinguisher from exploding.
- These pressurized vessels must be treated with respect and handled with care to prevent a potential mishap.
- There are 5 types of fire extinguishers (Class A, B, C, D, E and F) for various materials.



HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Often times, potential hazards are overlooked when inspecting, storing and handling fire extinguishers. Gases in high pressured cylinders contain an extraordinary amount of stored energy. If a cylinder valve is breached (i.e., breaks off when the cylinder falls and strikes a hard surface, etc.), the stored energy in the cylinder is released as thrust. The cylinder can accelerate to speeds great enough to penetrate concrete walls and travel over three-quarters of a mile in height. A government employee was killed in this very mishap only two months ago. Here is a list of hazards you should avoid with fire extinguishers:

- Don't leave fire extinguishers outside or in extreme heat or cold environments.
- Never test the fire extinguishers.
- Never try to repair the extinguisher.
- Do not store extinguishers on the floor in an unsecured and upright position. If the extinguishers fall and the valve is broken off, a missile-like hazard may be created.
- Don't store extinguishers near fire hazards. This can cause the extinguisher to explode or become inoperable.
- Do not drop the fire extinguisher. It can cause severe injury or death by projectile or exploding.



Corroded
Extinguisher



Projectiled Fire
Extinguisher



Dent in Cylinder

DO YOU KNOW?

INSPECTING THE FIRE EXTINGUISHER

To ensure the safety of employees and compliance, a trained, responsible person within your organization should conduct a monthly inspection to confirm the extinguisher has not been damaged or accidentally discharged using approved local procedures. These may include:

- Handle the fire extinguisher carefully.
- Make sure the hose (if so equipped) is intact and not obstructed.
- Ensure the pressure dial reads in the green or "charged" area.
- Verify the pull pin is properly secured within the handle and held in place by the tamper seal.
- Examine the extinguisher for visible dents, cracks or rust on its shaft.
- Verify the extinguisher is in its proper location and mounted correctly.
- Make sure the instruction label is visible, legible and facing outward.
- Check for modifications that might reduce the extinguisher's functionality.
- Ensure cylinders and apparatus used with compressed gas are not over-pressurized, which could lead to forceful rupture and flying fragments.
- Ensure the fire extinguisher is secured before walking away.

TRANSPORTING FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Transporting a fire extinguisher is a simple and safe process as long as caution is used during the process. Some of these safe processes include:

- Do not subject fire extinguisher cylinders to rough handling or abuse while transporting. Such misuse can seriously weaken the cylinder and render it unfit for further use or transform it into a rocket having sufficient thrust to drive it through masonry walls.
- Walk with the fire extinguisher to the vehicle in which you will transport it. Never run while you carry it, or you risk dropping it.
- A fire extinguisher should be mounted and located so it can be easily removed in a fire emergency. If it is not mounted, Drive slowly and carefully to prevent jarring or accidentally activating the trigger mechanism on the fire extinguisher.
- It should be readily accessible without need for moving or climbing over stock, materials, or equipment.



REFERENCES

- 29 CFR 1910.157 Occupational Safety and Health Standards Portable Fire Extinguishers
- NFPA 10 Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers

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